

and the efficient conduct of the proceeding.

(c) In case of the absence of the original presiding officer or his inability to act, the Administrator may assign to a successor the powers and duties of the original presiding officer without abatement of the proceeding unless otherwise ordered by the Administrator.

(d) The presiding officer may upon his own motion withdraw as presiding officer in a proceeding if he deems himself to be disqualified.

(e) A presiding officer may be requested to withdraw at any time prior to the recommended decision. Upon the filing by an interested person in good faith of a timely and sufficient affidavit alleging the presiding officer's personal bias, malice, conflict of interest, or other basis which might result in prejudice to a party, the hearing shall recess. The Administrator shall immediately act upon such allegation as a part of the record and decision in the proceeding, after making such investigation or holding such hearings, or both, as he may deem appropriate in the circumstances.

§ 201.9 Direct testimony submitted as written documents.

(a) Unless otherwise specified, all direct testimony, including accompanying exhibits, shall be submitted to the presiding officer in writing no later than the dates specified in the notice of the hearing, the final hearing agenda, or within 15 days after the conclusion of the prehearing conference, as the case may be. All direct testimony shall be in affidavit form, and exhibits constituting part of such testimony, referred to in the affidavit and made a part thereof, shall be attached to the affidavit. Direct testimony submitted with exhibits shall state the issue to which the exhibit relates; if no such statement is made, the presiding officer shall determine the relevance of the exhibit to the issues published in the FEDERAL REGISTER.

(b) The direct testimony submitted shall contain:

(1) A concise statement of the witness' interest in the proceeding and his position regarding the issues presented. If the direct testimony is presented by

a witness who is not a party, the witness shall state his relationship to the party;

(2) Facts that are relevant and material; and

(3) Any proposed issues of fact not stated in the notice of the hearing and the reason(s) why such issues should be considered at the hearing.

(c) Ten copies of all direct testimony shall be submitted unless the notice of the hearing specifies otherwise.

(d) Upon receipt, direct testimony shall be assigned a number and stamped with that number and the docket number.

(e) Contemporaneous with the publication of the notice of hearing, Amtrak's direct testimony in support of its application shall be available for public inspection as specified in the notice of hearing. Amtrak may submit additional direct testimony during the time periods allowed for submission of such testimony by witnesses.

§ 201.10 Mailing address.

Unless otherwise specified in the notice of hearing, all direct testimony shall be addressed to the Docket Clerk, Office of the Chief Counsel, Federal Railroad Administration, 400 7th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590. All affidavits and exhibits shall be clearly marked with the docket number of the proceeding.

§ 201.11 Inspection and copying of documents.

(a) If confidential financial information is not involved, any document in a file pertaining to any hearing authorized by this part or any document forming part of the record of such a hearing may be inspected or copied in the Office of the Chief Counsel, Federal Railroad Administration, 400 7th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590, unless the file is in the care and custody of the presiding officer in which case he shall notify the parties as to where and when the record may be inspected.

(b) If confidential financial information is involved, the presiding officer, at his discretion, upon the request of any party, may deny the public inspection and copying of such information.

§ 201.12

§ 201.12 Ex parte communications.

(a) After notice of a hearing is published in the FEDERAL REGISTER, all communications, whether oral or written, involving any substantive or procedural issue and directed either to the presiding officer or to the Administrator, without reference to these rules of procedure, shall be deemed ex parte communications and shall not be considered part of the record for decision. A record of oral ex parte communications shall be made by the persons contacted. All written ex parte communications shall be available for public viewing at the places(s) specified in the notice of hearing.

(b) The presiding officer shall not consult any person or party on any fact in issue or on the merits of the matter unless notice and opportunity is given for all parties to participate.

§ 201.13 Prehearing conference.

(a) After an examination of all the direct testimony submitted, the presiding officer shall make a preliminary determination of issues of fact to be addressed at the hearing.

(b) The presiding officer's preliminary determination shall be made available at the place or places provided in the notice of the hearing at least five days before the prehearing conference is held.

(c) The purpose of the prehearing conference shall be to enable the presiding officer to determine, on the basis of the direct testimony submitted and prehearing discussions:

(1) Whether the presiding officer's preliminary determination of issues of fact for the hearing has omitted or misconstrued any significant issues, and

(2) The nature of the interest of each party and which parties' interests are adverse.

(d) Only parties may participate in the prehearing conference. A party may appear in person or be represented by counsel.

(e) Parties who do not appear at the prehearing conference shall be bound by the conference's determinations.

§ 201.14 Final agenda of the hearing.

(a) After the prehearing conference, the presiding officer shall prepare a

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final agenda which shall be published in the FEDERAL REGISTER within ten days after the conclusion of the conference. A copy of the final agenda shall be mailed to all parties.

(b) The final agenda shall list:

(1) All the issues the hearing shall address, the order in which those issues shall be presented, and the direct testimony submitted on those issues; and

(2) A final date for submission of direct testimony on issues of fact not included in the notice of hearing if such issues are presented.

The final agenda may also specify a final date for submission of direct testimony to rebut testimony previously submitted during the time specified in the notice of the hearing.

(c) The presiding officer shall publish with the final agenda a list of witnesses who may appear at the hearing, a list of parties, the nature of the interest of each party, and which parties' interests are adverse on the issues presented.

§ 201.15 Determination to cancel the hearing.

(a) If the presiding officer concludes that no issues of fact are presented by the direct testimony submitted, he shall publish such conclusion in the FEDERAL REGISTER with a notice that a hearing shall not be held. The notice shall set forth a date for filing written comments on the proposed recommended decision. Written comments may include proposed findings and conclusions, arguments, or briefs.

(b) A person need not be a party to submit written comments.

(c) Promptly after expiration of the period for receiving written comments, the presiding officer shall make a recommended decision based on the record, which in this case shall consist of the testimony, exhibits, and written comments submitted. He shall transfer to the Administrator his recommended decision, the record, and a certificate stating that the record contains all the written direct testimony and comments submitted. The Administrator shall then make a final decision in accordance with these regulations.